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BIOGRAPHIC SKETCH

CHINA

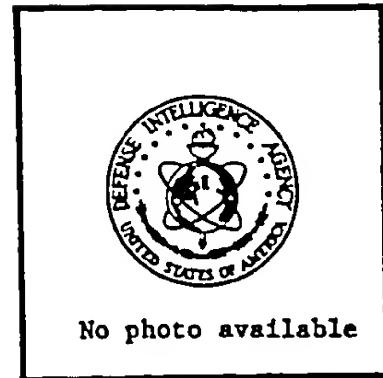
ZHANG Aiping
July 1979

(U) NAME: Zhang Aiping (Zhang Ai-ping) (1728/1947/5293) (pronounced jahng), Army. Zhang was a Colonel-General before the People's Liberation Army abolished ranks in 1965.

(U) POSITION: Chairman, National Defense Science and Technology Commission, since December 1975; Deputy Chief of General Staff, since October 1977; Member, Chinese Communist Party Central Committee, since August 1977.

(U) SIGNIFICANCE: The National Defense Science and Technology Commission is the central guidance and coordination organ for military-related research and development, production, and acquisition of advanced weapons technology. The General Staff includes a number of subdepartments that are functionally oriented toward integrated armed forces plans and operations, including research and development. As Chairman of the National Defense Science and Technology Commission and a deputy chief of General Staff, Zhang is an active participant in overseeing ongoing scientific and technical programs designed to enhance military operational capabilities.

(U) POLITICS: Zhang is a strong advocate of military modernization. He was reportedly a loyal supporter of the military modernization programs promoted by former Minister of National Defense Peng Dehuai. In 1965, Zhang helped then Chief of the General Staff Lo Ruiqing launch the "Great Military Tournament" -- a display of military skills generally interpreted as a protest against excessive politicization of the People's Liberation Army. Zhang was purged in 1966, during the Cultural Revolution, for being a "counterrevolutionary double dealer" and a member of Peng Dehuai's clique. Although he was rehabilitated in 1973, Zhang was not identified in a position until December 1975 when his appointment as Chairman of the National Defense Science and Technology Commission was announced. He was elected a member of the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee in August 1977. Zhang is believed to be a close associate of Party Vice Chairman Deng Xiaoping.



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(U) PERSONAL DATA: Zhang was born in 1908 in Sichuan Province. He came from a prominent landlord family. His brother, Zhang Zanming, was ambassador to Sri Lanka from 1957 to 1962. When the People's Liberation Army awarded medals in September 1955, Zhang received the Order of August First, the Order of Independence and Freedom, and the Order of Liberation -- all First Class. Zhang has published a number of articles and essays on military operations in which he participated during his early career.

(U) CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

1926-1929 - Joined the Young Communist League while studying in middle school in Shanghai, 1926. Worked among the peasants and was also a guerrilla fighter; joined 5th Red Army under Peng Dehuai, 1927. Left Peng's forces and organized an unsuccessful peasant uprising in Jiangsu Province.

1930-1932 - Commander, 2nd Contingent, 1st Division, 14th Army based in Jiangsu, 1930. The force was decimated in an attempt to implement Li Lisan's policy of capturing major urban centers. Escaped to Jiangxi and joined Mao Zedong's forces. Although accused of being a follower of the Li Lisan line, was exonerated of any wrongdoing.
- Secretary, Central Bureau of Young Communist League, Central Soviet area, 1931. Accused of coming from a reactionary family of the landlord class, but allowed to retain Party membership under supervision, 1932.

1933-1936 - Engaged in political work, 2nd Division, 3d Red Army, 1933. Entered Red Army Academy in Jiangxi where he studied Soviet military science, 1933. Political commissar, 4th Division, 3d Army Group, 1934. Made the Long March as regimental political commissar, 3d Army Group, 1934. Studied at Anti-Japanese Red University, 1936.

1939-1946 - Worked with guerrilla units in eastern Anhui, 1939. Was commanding a column of guerrillas along the Huai River, 1940. Became commander, 8th Brigade, 3d Division, New 4th Army, 1941. Concurrently deputy commander, Jiangsu Military District until 1944. Commander, 4th Division, New 4th Army, 1944.

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1947-1953 - The 4th Division became part of the East China People's Liberation Army, 1947 (redesignated 3d Field Army, 1948). Named chief of staff, 1948-54. Served as political commissar, East China Military Region's Naval Headquarters, 1949-51. Transferred to Zhejiang, 1951-53.

1954-1966 - Member, National Defense Council, 1954; reappointed 1959 and 1965. Deputy Chief of General Staff, 1955. Chief of Staff of the Advance Command, Taiwan Liberation Forces in Fujian, 1956-58. Member, military delegation to India, 1958. Elected Alternate Member, 8th Chinese Communist Party Central Committee, 1958. Headed military group of a goodwill delegation to Burma, 1960. Became deputy director, National Defense Science and Technology Commission, 1961.

1966-1973 - Came under criticism during the Cultural Revolution. Attacked by Red Guards as a supporter of Lo Ruiqing and Peng Dehuai and purged, 1966.

1973 to Present - Rehabilitated, 1973. Believed to be a member of the National Defense Science and Technology Commission from 1975. Identified as Chairman, National Defense Science and Technology Commission, 1975. Elected Member, 11th Chinese Communist Party Central Committee, 1977. Identified as a Deputy Chief of General Staff, 1977. Headed official delegation to Switzerland, 1978.

Prepared by: [REDACTED] DIA/DB-2B4

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